

**DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA
THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2003
6:30 P.M.**

Pursuant to the proper notification, the Durham City Council held a special meeting on the above date and time in the Council Chambers at City Hall with the following members present: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cheek and Council Members Best, Clement, Cole-McFadden, Edwards and Stith. Absent: None.

Also present: City Manager Marcia Conner, City Attorney Henry Blinder, City Clerk D. Ann Gray and Deputy City Clerk Linda Bratcher.

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance.

**SUBJECT: DATA TRANSIT SYSTEM – PROPOSED SERVICE AND ROUTE
REDUCTIONS**

To receive citizens' comments on the proposed service and route reductions for the DATA Transit System.

Mayor Bell stated there will be no bus route reductions and the fare will be increased to \$1.00 as recommended by the Durham Area Transit Authority. He noted Council will be taking action on the proposed fare increase on Monday, June 16, 2003 as a part of the budget for FY 03-04.

Mayor Bell opened the public hearing.

Steve Hopkins spoke in support of no route reductions. Also, Mr. Hopkins spoke in support of the city employees and benefits.

Diane Cutotti opposed increasing the bus fare. Also, Ms. Cutotti stated route reductions should have never been considered.

Clay Edison spoke in support of no bus route reductions.

Shelia Ramos spoke in support of no bus route reductions. Also, she raised concern with the possibility of future cuts.

Victoria Peterson voiced concern with federal funds [transit trust fund] being used improperly. Ms. Peterson requested an investigation of the transit trust fund.

Mayor Bell noted to his knowledge no federal funds have been used improperly.

Tami Richard spoke in support of no reduction in service. She stated all the new buses are not operating at the present.

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Steve Mancuso, representing DATA, noted all 31 buses are in -12 are actually operating on the street and the remaining buses have been delayed due to the fact radios need to be installed.

Nikki Harris spoke in support of no bus route reductions. Ms. Harris stated she has requested an outside audit of the bus system/funds.

Cindy Pieper spoke in support of no route reductions.

Robert Hayes spoke in support of no route reductions.

Betty Harrington made comments on this item.

Christopher Tiffany made comments on Council betraying their oath of office.

Amiris Brown asked if the fare increase included the senior citizens and youth. Ms. Brown asked why would the council waste money on surveillance cameras when people are shooting outside the bus. Ms. Brown also informed council that one of the new buses has already broken down and there should be no fare increase.

Steve Mancuso made comments on the fare increase [tickets that can be purchased which includes 15% off \$1.00] and the security cameras.

William McKnight thanked the council for not cutting bus service. Mr. McKnight stated he hoped the citizens would not need to come back next year regarding this matter.

Mayor Bell made comments on the budget process for the city and the DATA Board.

Steven Matherly, representing People's Alliance, stated Council's desire not to raise taxes led to the recommendation for route reductions. He also stated the transit trust fund is being used to cover up mismanagement within city government. Mr. Matherly made comments on the city giving Capitol Broadcasting funds.

Stephen Cassell spoke in support of Access Service. Mr. Cassell made comments on the cut in bus service at Willowdale Shopping Center several years ago.

Lillian Lyon spoke in opposition to the bus fare being increased to \$1.00. Ms. Lyon thanked the council for not cutting service.

Michael Carter made comments on the lack of communication with the public relative to the proposed bus service cuts and the open meetings law.

Mayor Bell made comments on the process for holding city government meetings.

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Rita Gregory thanked the Council for not reducing bus service. Also, Ms. Gregory expressed a concern with the private security at the main bus terminal. She spoke in support of the Police Department being responsible for this function.

Mildred Carlton spoke on housing rehabilitation, crime, weedy lots, and boarded up houses.

Alison Wilson thanked the Council for not reducing bus service.

Deborah Carver stated if the fare is increased to \$1.00 all the new buses should be made available to the public.

Horace Dunn thanked the Council for not decreasing the bus routes. Also, Mr. Dunn spoke in support of Durham's DATA bus drivers and stated he appreciated the work done by them.

James Steven Coote asked Council about the recent funds received from the federal government.

Mayor Bell stated the new federal dollars which the staff became aware of on Tuesday evening – these dollars are being used to help balance the DATA budget.

James Frasier spoke on the DATA bus system.

Lee Chapman thanked the Council for not reducing the bus service and voiced concern on the original recommendation.

Cindy Simmons expressed concern with security on the buses. She stated Council should review having better security on the buses instead of increasing the fare.

Calvin Wise spoke in support of the DATA drivers. He noted a lot of the buses do not have air.

Preston Norman expressed concern with no air conditioning on the buses.

Evelyn Ray informed Council of an incident on the bus involving gang members.

The Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tempore Cheek seconded by Council Member Stith to receive citizens' comments on the proposed service and route reductions for the DATA Transit System was approved at 7:56 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cheek and Council Members Best, Clement, Cole-McFadden, Edwards and Stith. Noes: None. Absent: None.

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Several members of Council expressed concern with the delay in getting all the new buses on the streets.

Steve Mancuso made comments on when the radios would be installed.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

D. Ann Gray, CMC
City Clerk